

PUPAE

Press Kit

LOGLINE

Compelled to confront his past, Moses returns home after living in a swamp for 7 years.

DIRECTOR



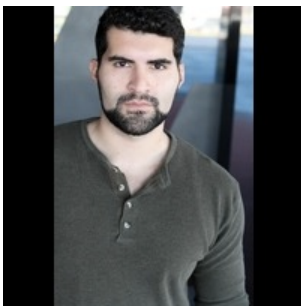
Ryan Hope Travis is an actor, director, filmmaker and artistic innovator based in Atlanta, GA. He was commissioned by the New York State Council on the Arts to write and perform "A Shout in Salty Water," a one man show based on interviews with 17 low-income African American fathers in Syracuse, NY. His other one-man show, "June 16," is an autobiographical piece based on interviews with fathers in Washington D.C. It received its regional premiere at the Kitchen Theatre Company in April 2015. Ryan calls his collection of one-man shows: The Father/Son Play Cycle. With over a dozen professional theater credits to his name, Ryan's experience as film actor is equally vast.

As an educator, Ryan has over 9 years of university teaching experience. He taught acting and other theater courses at Syracuse University, Colgate University, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, the University of Florida, International Dance Academy, and Theatre of Arts College for the Contemporary

Actor in Los Angeles. Ryan received the Community Service Award, and special recognition for exceptional student evaluations he received as Visiting Professor at Syracuse University. While there, he developed and administered the Syracuse University Community Theater Initiative, a pilot program sponsored by the Dean's Office. He also designed and taught 'Theater for Social Change,' a course that examines how theater mobilizes oppressed groups around the world.

Ryan pursued Black Studies in college (B.A., Fort Valley State University) and graduate school (M.A., Syracuse University). He went on to earn a Master of Fine Arts in Acting from the University of Florida. He has written for The SAGE Encyclopedia of African Cultural Heritage in North America, 2015 and Syracuse New Times. Additionally, he is the founder and head filmmaker of Arcable, a film production company dedicated to producing works of art rooted in social commentary. For more information about Ryan, visit www.ryanhopetravis.com.

ACTORS



Cristian Gonzalez is a classically trained actor and a graduate of the University of Florida where he received a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Acting. He is a working actor in the Atlanta film market and an experienced improviser, as well as a spoken word poet and writer.

His family moved from Puerto Rico when he was six years old, effectively making him an American Immigrant. Following the footsteps of the millions who came before, he carried the immigrant work ethic to early academic and sports success.

Once he discovered his passion in the arts, he dedicated himself fully toward the discovery, expression and mastery of his craft in honor of all of those who were never given the opportunity to dream.



Cree Armstead is an actress, model and dancer hailing from Seattle and currently based in Florida. She was classically trained at the University of Florida's School of Theatre and Dance and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre.

Ms. Armstead has performed in works from Shakespeare to Sophocles to Tennessee Williams. She played the lead role of Jocasta in the UF Greece Tour and has also written and directed several productions, including the original piece "Shades of Infatuation." She was a featured dancer in the West African dance production, "Agebididi". She has modeled for Macy's, Petite Magnifique, and is the current face of Gia Swim. When she's not on set or walking the runway, she is lesson planning for her awesome middle school students, who know her as "Ms. A."

Cree is a proud member of the Cree First Nations people and is striving to use her platform to advocate for Native American and other minority rights. With her success, she hopes to put Native Americans in the spotlight and bring attention to issues such as sexual assault and preserving Indigenous history. In her free time, she enjoys teaching dance, traveling, and spending time with her dog and pot-belly pig.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **One-Man Crew**
This film was written, directed, shot, edited, designed, and composed by one person. The decision to have one crew member honors the theme of the film: one man's journey toward hope.
- **Part Autobiographical**
The story is based on the filmmaker's experience of having a miscarriage. Three months after losing the baby, this film was created. Of all of the themes this film may evoke, the filmmaker would like hope, forgiveness, and redemption to be supreme.
- **Filmed at a Swamp**
"Pupae" was filmed on location at Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park, a 21,000 acre savanna in Micanopy, Florida. While gators are abundant at the park, the cast and crew only encountered relentless swamp flies.
- **Multiethnic Cast and Crew**
The lead actor is Puerto Rican, the supporting actor is a member of the Cree First Nations People, and the director/writer is African American.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I started making this film 3 months after losing what would have been my first child. While people endure loss in many different ways, my partner spiraled into a deep depression from which I could not save her. Like Moses, the protagonist of the film, she ran.

Art was my coping mechanism. The only thing that could soothe the heartbreak was my guitar and the prospect of working on a film. Any film. I was living in Los Angeles at the time, and my then roommate encouraged me to turn my experience into a film. Thus began the process of developing "Pupae."

'Pupa' is a life stage for insects that undergo transformation. Think cocoon. 'Pupae' is the plural version of the term. While it's clear that Moses is going through a transformation (albeit 7 years long), Zion has also gone through her own transformation as well. Like the characters, I went through a transformation making this film.

My decision to create this film by myself came early. I grieved in private, so the idea of explaining what inspired the story horrified me. I needed to be in my own thoughts. I couldn't take people asking: are you okay? I needed people to be oblivious so I could wear a mask of normalcy.

The process of writing the screenplay was cathartic and healing. Handing it over to the actors was a small victory. While filming, I told the actors the history of the piece. This brought us closer together. The original screenplay had sweeping monologues and endless moments of silent reflection. The film also includes a poem and an original song. As you can imagine, the first cut was almost 3 times the length of the final version. In the end, I decided to distill the story to Moses' journey home. So, the only words we hear are the words to his unborn son.

The poem, I wrote for my unborn child. The song, I wrote for his mother. The film, I made for me. And you.